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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CONRAD R. BURNS, a Senator from the State of Montana.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Lord and our God, as the waters fill the sea, let America be filled with people who know You. Help our citizens to live for Your honor. Increase our faith, hope, and love that we may receive Your promises. Be merciful to our Nation, for You are our hope. The brightness of Your glory covers the heavens and light flashes from Your Hands. Hide not Your mighty power from us.

Empower our lawmakers today with the music of Your wisdom that they may bring hope out of despair and joy out of sadness. Teach us to celebrate, even in the darkness, because You are the God who saves us. Give us the strength to stand on the mountain. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CONRAD R. BURNS led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, July 6, 2004.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable CONRAD R. BURNS, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. BURNS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I do want to welcome everyone back following the Fourth of July recess. Today, we return to business for a relatively brief, under-3-week legislative period, but what I know will be a very productive legislative period. This morning we will proceed to executive session and the consideration of J. Leon Holmes to be a U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Pursuant to the agreement reached prior to adjourning, there will be up to 6 hours of debate today before the vote on the confirmation of this nomination. I anticipate that vote occurring sometime around 5:30 today, and that will be the first vote of the day.

We also expect to consider additional judicial nominations throughout this period prior to the August recess, and we will be scheduling those nominations as they become available.

Following the vote on the Holmes nomination, we will begin consideration of the class action fairness legislation, and that debate will begin after the vote and continue tonight. This class action bill is a bipartisan bill, and

I hope we will be able to consider it in a fair and expeditious way. As I mentioned, this is an abbreviated legislative period due to the respective party conventions which begin later this month. There is a lot of work to do over the next 3 weeks, including consideration of the appropriations bills.

The best way for us to ensure we complete the class action measure is for the Senate to focus on related amendments on that bill. The issue has been before this body previously; therefore, I hope we can consider relevant amendments and ultimately pass this legislation with a large bipartisan vote. If this bill becomes a vehicle for every unrelated issue that is stored in people's desks and in their minds, I am afraid this abbreviated schedule will not make it possible to do that. And if we insist upon offering a lot of unrelated amendments, the ultimate consideration of the bill clearly will be impossible because of the time involved.

Having said that, I will be working with the Democratic leadership to see if we can finish this bill in a reasonable period of time. Again, I welcome back all of my colleagues. It will be a very busy session over the next 3 weeks. I ask in advance for everyone's patience and cooperation during this period.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, if the majority leader will yield?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. DASCHLE. Let me welcome him back and express the hope that we can work together on a number of issues this work period. Could the majority leader give us some indication as to what we might expect once the class action bill has been completed? What other issues do you expect to take during this 3-week period and in what order of sequence? If the majority leader could share that with us, it would be helpful as well.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, as we get back and do our planning over the course of the next several hours and

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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